



A N
A B S T R A C T
O F

*The SETTLEMENT of the Westminster Contributionship
for Insuring Houses and Buildings from Loss by
FIRE; including the Additions and Alterations made
by the Members at their General Meetings.*



Convenient House or Place shall be taken for an Office (which Office is now in Bedford-Street, Covent-Garden) within the Liberty of Westminster; from which Liberty, neither the Directors, nor any General Meeting, shall have Power to remove it: And whatever Member shall, at any General Meeting, offer to move for such Removal, or give his Consent thereto, such Member shall forfeit to the Contributionship his whole Deposit-Money, and Interest in the Office, and his Insurance shall be void: *Art. 2.*

Office Situation.

TWO General Meetings of the Contributors shall be held at the said Office every Year, viz. on the second Thursday in April and October, or within ten Days after; or oftener, if the Directors, or other Contributors insuring Ten Thousand Pounds, shall find just Occasion; whereof Fourteen Days Notice must be given in the Gazette: and all such Meetings to begin at Three in the Afternoon, and continue till the Business is dispatched: *Art. 3 and 5.*

General Meetings appointed.

ANY General Meeting hath Power of making Bye-Laws for the better managing and governing the Affairs of the Society; which Bye-Laws are to be confirmed by a second General Meeting: *Art. 6.*

Power of General Meetings.

NO General Meeting shall consist of less than Thirty Members, Five of whom to be Directors: *Art. 7.*

Not less than thirty Members.

EIGHTEEN Directors shall be annually chosen at the General Meeting in October; Nine of whom to be out of the Directors of the preceding Year, who have not continued in their Office two Years successively; and the other Nine to be out of the qualified Contributors: *Art. 4 and 5. General Meeting 9th April 1730.*

Choice of Directors.

NO Person shall be capable of being chosen a Director, unless he has been insured in the Office two Years for Two Thousand Pounds at the least.—Persons serving the Office in their Professions or Trades, or being indebted thereto, shall not be chosen Directors: *Art. 8. General Meetings 18th October 1753, and 16th April 1761.*

Qualification of Directors.

NO Director shall be capable of serving more than Two Years successively, and such Members as have served Two Years successively, shall not be chosen Directors till the End of Seven Years after their having so served: *Art. 9. General Meeting 19th April 1759.*

Duty and Power of Directors.

THE Directors shall have the managing of all Affairs of the Office, and shall always choose a Chairman out of their own Number, to be Chairman at the General Meetings, who, in case of equal Votes, is to have a casting Vote: *Art. 4.*

THE

Weekly Meetings and Allowance to *Directors*.

THE *Directors* shall meet Weekly, on *Thursdays*, between Three and Seven, to attend the Business of the *Society*, and have Twenty Shillings *per Week* divided equally among such as attend the Business of the *Office*; which Allowance shall not be augmented or lessened either by the *Directors* or any *General Meeting*: *Art. 10.*

Dispatch of Business by *Directors*.

FIVE or more of the *Directors* may dispatch all Business, except the lending out Monies, purchasing Annuities or other Effects, and also placing or displacing of all Officers, where a Majority of Eighteen shall be present and consenting: *Art. 11 and 17*; and *General Meeting 18th October 1753.*

Lending of Money.

THE *Directors* may lend, at lawful Interest, any Sum of Money, not exceeding One Thousand Pounds, upon one Security, first approved of by Counsel; and may lend upon Parliamentary Securities what they shall think fit: But upon any Loans or Purchases, the Resolution of the *Directors* shall be made and confirmed at two successive Meetings, and a Majority of them shall be present, and consent thereto: *Art. 12 and 13.*

THE *Directors* shall not lend above Three-fourths of the Value of any House as Insured by the *Society*; and in Case any House mortgaged to the *Office* shall happen to be burnt, they may detain the Money insured thereon until the Mortgage-Money be paid: *Art. 14 and 15.*

Damages to be viewed and valued by the *Directors* nearest thereto.

THAT such *Directors*, whose Dwellings shall be nearest to any Damage sustained by Fire, shall forthwith view and value the same, without any Expence to the *Society* on their Account: But when it shall be necessary to take Workmen to value the Damage, the *Directors* may give Allowance proportionable to the Service: *Art. 16.*

Three *Directors* to execute all Policies.

THE *Directors* for the Time being, or three of them, shall execute all *Policies*, in the Name, and under the Seal of the *Society*; and all Securities, or other Writings relating to the said *Society*, shall be made in the same Manner: *Art. 18.*

Directors lawful Acts to bind every Member.

ALL the lawful Orders and Acts of the *Directors* and *Trustees* shall bind every Member of the *Office*: *Art. 19.*

Directors indemnified.

THE *Directors* shall be indemnified in the Execution of their Trust, by the *Contribution-ship*, and not be chargeable with the Defaults one of another; and such Indemnity shall be first made good out of the Effects of the *Office*: *Art. 20.*

And to deliver up all Monies, &c. to succeeding *Directors*.

THE *Directors* and *Treasurers* shall account for, and deliver up, all Monies and Securities belonging to the *Society*, to the succeeding *Directors*, upon the Determination of their Trust: *Art. 21.*

No standing Counsel, &c.

NO standing Counsel, Attorney or Scrivener shall be fixed for the Affairs of the *Office*, but the *Directors* shall from Time to Time chuse them as they think fit: *Art. 24.*

Choice of Officers and their Salaries.

A Majority of the Eighteen *Directors* have the Choice and Displacing of the *Clerks*, *Surveyor*, and *Messenger*, employed in the Business of the *Society*, and may pay them such Salaries as shall be approved of by a *General Meeting*: *Art. 25, 26, and 27.*

Watermen.

THEY have also the Choice and Displacing of the *Watermen*, of whom there are Thirty entertained in the Service of the *Society*, who are employed in extinguishing of Fires, and are clothed, and have Badges bearing the Mark of the *Office*: *Art. 28. and Meeting of Directors 15th April 1725; General Meeting 16th April, 1752.*

Auditors, their Duty and Allowance.

FOUR *Auditors* shall be chosen Yearly, by Ballotting, out of the Members of the *Society*, at the *General Meeting* held in *April*, who are Monthly to inspect and state the current Receipts and Payments entered in the *Society's* Books, and lay the same before the *Directors*; and also twice in the Year (over and above the *Monthly Audits*) shall draw up a General Account of the Cash in Stock, of Insurances, and of Receipts and Payments, to be laid before the *General Meetings*; for which Service they shall be allowed Twenty Shillings *per Month*, to be divided amongst such as attend: Which Allowance neither the *Directors* nor *General Meeting* have Power to augment or lessen: *Art. 22.*

Their Qualification.

NO *Auditor* shall be capable of serving more than two Years successively; and such shall not be re-chosen till the End of Seven Years after their having so served. No Member serving the *Society* in their Profession or Trade, or that are indebted thereto, shall be capable of being chosen an *Auditor*: *Art. 20.*

NO Person shall be chosen an *Auditor*, but who has been an Insurer for Two Thousand Pounds two Years at the least: *General Meeting 16th April 1761, 16th April 1772.*

Non-Attendance.

AN *Auditor* not attending three Months, a new one may be chosen by the *Directors*, if they think fit: *Art. 23. General Meeting 18th October 1753.*

Limits of Insurance.

THE Limits of Insurance extend Twenty-five computed Miles any distant Way from the *Office*: *Art. 29. General Meetings 13th April 1721, 20th October 1748.*

PERSONS

PERSONS insuring shall deposit, as a Pledge for the Performance of their Covenants, Twelve Shillings *per Cent.* on Brick, and double for Timber Houses, within Five Miles of the Office; and shall make the same Deposit, and defray the Charge of the *Surveyor* and *Messenger's* Journey to survey the Premises, and set up the Mark; and also the *Director's* Journey to estimate a Damage, when any Loss happens beyond Five Miles, and not exceeding Ten. And all Insurers are to pay Ten Shillings *per Cent.* Deposit, and Four Shillings *per Cent.* Premium, on Brick, and double for Timber Buildings, which shall be insured in this Society, betwixt the Distance of Ten and Twenty-five Miles from the Office: *Art. 35. General Meetings 13th April 1721, and 20th October 1748.*

Charge of Insuring.

THE Deposit Money to be returned to every Insurer at the Expiration of his Policy, together with the yearly Dividends of Profits, except what shall be necessary to defray incident Charges and Losses by Fire, which shall be first deducted out of the same. Which Deposit-Money on Policies expired, and not demanded in seven Years after, shall be forfeited to the Society; except only when such Policies are renewed in this Office, and then the Deposit-Money to be allowed: *Art. 25, 38. General Meetings 13th April 1721, 20th October 1748, 18th October 1753, 26th October 1758, and 16th April 1761.*

Deposit-Money to be returned,

If demanded in seven Years.

PERSONS insuring to pay for each Policy Four-pence for all Houses within, and Twelve-pence for all without the *Bills of Mortality*, besides Stamp Duty: *Art. 36.*

Price of Policies.

EVERY Person to pay their Money when they direct the Policies to be made out; and the Clerks are not to make out any Policies, without the Premium, Deposit, and Stamps being first paid: *Art. 37. Board of Directors 18th November 1756.*

Insurers to pay before Policies made out.

EACH Policy to contain but one House, unless where two, three, or more small Houses stand contiguous together, which do not exceed the Sum of One Thousand Two Hundred Pounds Value, and they may be insured in one Policy; each House being distinctly valued: *Art. 30. General Meetings 13th April 1721, 21st April 1757, and 17th April 1760.*

Two or more small Houses together, not exceeding 1200 l. in Value in one Policy.

IF any House should be insured in any other Office, by the same Person or Persons, at the same Time it is insured in this, such Insurance shall be void: *Art. 31.*

Insurance in this Office void, if at the same Time insured in any other Office.

EVERY Insurance to be made for Seven Years; such Insurance, however, to continue in Force until Six of the Clock in the Evening of that Day seven Years on which the same is dated, and if, in the mean Time, any Insurer's Property in the Premises insured should cease, such Insurer, or legal Representative, may receive the Return of Deposit due upon the respective Policy or Policies, the same being delivered up to the Office to be cancelled: *General Meeting 18th October 1753.*

Insurance for Seven Years; but if Property ceases, the Insurer or his Representative may receive the Deposit.

HOUSES of above Two Thousand Pounds Value, that are built of Brick or Stone, and having Brick or Stone Party-Walls, and the several Divisions of such Houses being also of Brick or Stone from the Bottom to the Top, may be insured in one Policy, not exceeding the full Value, as Brick, after the Rate of Twelve Shillings *per Cent.* provided three or more of the *Directors* for the Time being do first view the same.

What Sums shall be insured.

HOUSES exceeding two Thousand Pounds in Value, that are built of Brick or Stone, and having Brick or Stone Party-Walls, and the several Divisions of such Houses being of Brick or Timber, or all Timber, may be insured in one Policy, not exceeding the full Value, one Half as Brick and the other Half as Timber, that is, after the Rate of Eighteen Shillings *per Cent.* on the whole Sum insured thereon, provided three or more of the *Directors* for the Time being do first view the same: *General Meeting 19th October 1769.*

NEW Houses may be insured when tiled in: *Art. 33.*

When New Houses may be insured.

THIS Office insures to the full Value on all Houses: *General Meetings 12th April 1722, 13th October 1753, and 19th April 1759.*

All Insurances to the full Value.

HOUSES having Party-Walls of Brick or Stone shall be esteemed Brick Houses, otherwise Timber; and the *Directors*, upon the *Surveyor's* Report, shall determine concerning Brick or Timber Houses: *Art. 34.*

Party - Walls distinguish Brick from Timber Houses.

EVERY Member, upon any Loss, shall certify the same to the *Directors* within Thirty Days next after such Loss happens, that skilful Persons may view and report the same, and a Rate of Contributions be made thereon, otherwise the Society is not obliged to make good such Losses: *Art. 39.*

Losses to be certified to the *Directors* within Thirty Days after they happen, otherwise not to be made good.

THE *Directors* are empowered either to pay the Money insured on Houses destroyed or damaged by Fire within Sixty Days after Notice given to them at their Office, or to rebuild or re-instate the same with all convenient Speed; Gilding, History-Painting, and Carving excepted; and no more than 50 l. to be allowed for any Chimney-Piece: *Art. 40. General Meetings 12th April 1722, 18th October 1753, and 22d October 1772.*

In case of Loss, the Money to be paid in Sixty Days, or the House to be rebuilt with all convenient Speed.

ANY Member within Eight Days after any Rate shall be declared, may examine the Books; and in Case of Exception, upon just Cause or Error, the same shall be rectified by the *Directors*; and if they disagree, by a *General Meeting*: *Art. 41.* EVERY

Errors to be rectified in Contributions to Loss.

Year's Account.

EVERY Year's Account to commence the 1st of *October*, and determine the 30th of *September* following; and the neat Profits arising by Interest, &c. shall be divided Yearly, in Proportion to every *Member's Insurance*; for which their Account shall have Credit in the *Society's Stock*, to be paid at the Expiration of their *Policies*; and double Dividends to be allowed for Timber-Buildings: *Art. 43. General Meeting 18th October 1753.*

Contributions to Losses.

THAT Contributions to Losses shall be also stated Yearly, and every Person Insuring in the same Year shall contribute, in Proportion to his Insurance, to the Losses, and receive a Dividend of the Profits of that Year: *Art. 44.*

How much.

ALL *Members* shall contribute to the making good Losses, in Proportion to their Insurance, but none to be charged above Ten Shillings *per Cent.* for Brick, and double for Timber Houses: Which if any Loss shall ever require, any *Member*, first paying his said Share, and remitting his Deposit-Money, may surrender his *Policy*, and be discharged: *Art. 45 and 46.*

Tables of Salaries, Fees, and Yearly Dividends, to be kept at the Office.

A public Table to be kept at the Office of all the Fees and Salaries, and another of the yearly Dividends of Profits and Losses; which every *Member* may peruse, and take Notes of *gratis*: *Art. 47 and 48.*

THIS Settlement to bind all Persons insuring in this *Society* (as well as those who subscribed the same) and their Executors, Administrators and Assignees, respectively: *Art. 49.*

AN
ABSTRACT
OF THE
SETTLEMENT
OF THE
Wellminster Contributionship.

Quendin Street

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1 vol Bales 2. May 1774 for £1200



Insurance II